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prize very highly a free theology, knowing that such a theology is called to the exercise of a vital function in the church of pure doctrine."

W. RUPP.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH,
Lancaster, Pa.

THE GOSPEL OF THE ATONEMENT. *The Hulsean Lectures for 1898-99.* By JAMES M. WILSON, A.M., Vicar of Rochdale. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899. Pp. 165. \$1.

THESE lectures are the result of their author's conviction that "in the theory of the atonement, in the thought of Christ's work for us, which ought to be the foundation of Christian faith and its greatest charm, lies at the present time the greatest obstacle to that faith."

He means that the traditional, orthodox view of a substitutionary expiatory power in the cross to propitiate divine justice and thus reconcile God and man is so repugnant to the modern mind, and so inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel as now recognized by the church, that it must be abandoned if the world is to be reached by Christianity in these times.

He admits that the terms and figures used to describe the modus of the atonement favor the objective transactual view. But "it is vain to quote texts." The "altar imagery" of the Jews was necessary at the time to convey the ideas of redemption, but our present point of view forces us to new interpretations. The New Testament writers spoke the language of their day; but the Greek school of theologians who followed the apostles confined themselves to the spirit of the word rather than the letter. It was what Christ does in us, rather than what he has done for us, which they apprehended and formulated.

With Augustine the western mind, trained in the forensic school of Roman law, entered the arena, and thenceforth constructive theology became the rule. To this formalistic method we owe the severities of the faith which are now at last being outgrown. The subjective tone and trend of modern thought, the habit of looking at truth through the medium of life and its processes, has irresistibly moved Christian thinkers to a corresponding treatment of the mysteries of the cross.

That the sufferings of Christ were not penal, but sympathetic; that he saves from sin by exhibiting to the sinner the awful nature of moral evil and inspiring him with the ability to abjure and avoid it; that redemption and regeneration are but terms describing different phases of the one divine-human process of converting the sinful into the holy; that this process is but a manifestation of the love of God working on the world and in it, and by means of this operation sure at last to overcome all evil and displace it with good—this is the gospel of the atonement.

We need not say that it is but a new publication of the "moral influence theory" which has been current with many for a long time in this country. The book will add little to the literature of that department of theology, but it is one of the best of its kind. Frank and fearless in expression, reverent in mood, spiritual in motive, and practical in aim, it is a well-deserving treatment of the central mystery of our faith. Horace Bushnell would have welcomed it heartily.

We may do as much, with the understanding that the atonement is a doctrine so many-sided as to permit an indefinite number and variety of views to be taken of it. Doubtless there is a sense in which each of the theories of the cross—the substitutionary, commercial, governmental, sympathetic, ethical, vital—may subtend some arc of the infinite circle of truth. The last word has not yet been said about the atonement. It never will be said by finite thought and language.

One grave objection to this work is on account of the fact that the writer does not recognize this principle. He treats every other theory of the atonement with a severity due only to positive error. This is unphilosophical. It does not allow for the variation of points of view which the historic process necessitates. In the evolution of truth a place can be found for the substitutionary theory as well as for the vital.

CHARLES J. BALDWIN.

GRANVILLE, O.

MORALITY AS A RELIGION. An Exposition of Some First Principles. By W. R. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN. London: Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., Lim.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1898. Pp. vi + 296. \$2.

THIS volume is made up of addresses given by the author before the Ethical Religion Society, in Steinway Hall, Portman Square, London. Two sentences from its preface will indicate sufficiently its